

Mr. Paul E. Stacey
Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse
Planning and Standards Division
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127



Testimony in support of the Proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations

Mr. Stacey,

As a Darien resident and member of the Mianus Chapter of Trout Unlimited, I am writing today to express my support for the Proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations.

The importance of the Proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations, and the impact they will have of improving the quality of one of our state's most precious natural resources, cannot be emphasized enough.

Given the 30 years since Connecticut's regulations were last modified, the time is now to implement stream flow standards which will help preserve and improve the state's rivers and streams while providing protection to water supplies for human needs.

Water is a public resource. It belongs to the residents of Connecticut and must be protected and preserved for human uses, but also for ecological health and recreational enjoyment. It is a quality of life issue important to all Connecticut residents.

There is plenty of water to go around and these regulations will help lead the way to improved water management in the state.

The current regulations do not adequately protect the fragile ecology of our rivers and streams. Rivers in Connecticut face an abundance of threats from development, overconsumption, poor water management, pollution and other factors. The proposed regulations will ensure that a consistent, adequate flow will exist in all of Connecticut's rivers and streams, providing the needed habitat to allow trout and other species to survive and thrive.

That the proposed regulations will apply to all rivers in Connecticut is a major step in protecting the health of our rivers and streams.

The proposed flow requirements also take into account the natural high and low flow periods present in any given year, and recognize that water releases must be made to more closely match these naturally occurring cycles. Such natural flows will have a significant impact on the quality and health of the ecosystem.

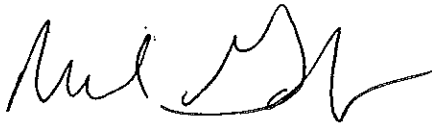
Please allow us the opportunity to make such improvements in our urban streams. Class 4 rivers can be brought back, but we need the water flows to be there to sustain the current level of life and allow for upstream passage once we have improved the habitat.

In closing, the Proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations represent an important step in ensuring an abundant supply of water for human use while protecting the ecological needs and recreational enjoyment of Connecticut's rivers and streams.

Balancing these needs is a difficult task, and the proposed regulations admirably create a standard that accounts for that balance.

I would ask that you carefully consider the proposed regulations in light of these and other public comments, with particular attention paid to the classification process, the need to provide at least minimal protection to Class 4 streams and the importance of including within the regulations a specific avenue for improving stream ecology.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Gault", with a stylized, flowing script.

Michael Gault
46 Birch Road
Darien, CT 06820
Mianus Chapter - Trout Unlimited